

Women's International Leadership Challenge: Uganda

Project Summaries

Uganda Diabetes Association

In Uganda, diabetes is an increasing problem, particularly in urban areas. However, there are few resources available to reliably estimate the magnitude of the problem and the response to the disease is very underdeveloped. The Ugandan Diabetes Association, founded in the 1980s, is a patient based association and the only NGO working in diabetes. It is working towards identifying risk factors for diabetes in Uganda, scaling up patient education around the disease, advocating for the needs of diabetic patients within the medical system, as well as providing care and support to diabetic patients. The Association has identified two very strong women to take part in the programme and there are several options for projects, including: an organizational review, an internal communications strategy, an external patient education campaign, a campaign to reach out to those not yet diagnosed, and/or a fundraising/marketing campaign.

Send a Cow, www.sendacow.org.uk

Send a Cow works to empower and inspire some of Uganda's poorest women to break out of poverty. The organisation creates sustainable rural development by providing training, livestock, seeds and ongoing support to help families make the most of the land and resources they already have. As well as teaching animal husbandry & organic farming, Send a Cow runs parallel courses in social and life skills, addressing subjects such as gender equality, conflict resolution, health and hygiene and HIV/AIDS awareness. Send a Cow wants to use the women's leadership programme to foster its future women leaders as well as to develop a specific communications/web-based campaign.

Grameen Foundation, www.grameenfoundation.org

The Grameen Foundation helps the world's poorest especially women access financial solutions and technology services to enable them to break out of poverty. Grameen spearheads technology initiatives that create new micro business opportunities for the poor, provide telecommunications access for the world's rural poor, and improve their access to health and agriculture information and other services. In Uganda, Grameen achieves this through its innovative mobile phone applications laboratory: Applab. Grameen are finding recruitment of ambitious and dynamic women difficult and wants to use the women's leadership programme to tackle this problem by creating opportunities and to begin supporting and driving the development of their female staff.

NACWOLA, www.nacwola.or.ug

The National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (NACWOLA) was founded in 1992 in response to a lack of information available to HIV positive women. Today the organisation has 30 branches and a membership of over 60,000 women with HIV. Through its programme, NACWOLA empowers HIV infected parents to support children with family memories, ensuring they survive parental loss with fewer traumas; advocates for accessibility to services such as anti-retroviral therapy and education for children and promotes income generating activities. NACWOLA would like to use the women's leadership programme to conduct an organisational review of its structures and systems and boost the leadership potential of its employees.

Uganda Red Cross Society, www.redcrossug.org

The Ugandan Red Cross Society is the leading humanitarian organization in Uganda. Today, it has over 200,000 registered members with one and half million beneficiaries of its interventions throughout the country. Within Uganda, it is partnered with the Ugandan National Blood Transfusion Service (UBTS) and plays a lead role in sensitising and mobilising communities and institutions to donate blood for free. Uganda is one of the countries where blood donations average less than 10 per 1,000 of the population and the proportion sourced from safer non-remunerated donors as opposed to riskier paid or family related sources is low. The NHBST believe that gender imbalance in blood donation is a challenge. The current gender ratio of blood donors is 7:3 (men: women). They want to try and address this imbalance by bringing more women on board. Through the women's leadership programme they hope to build the capacity of their female staff so that they can lead and motivate other women in turn.



"When you empower women, they can better educate their peers; we need to incorporate more gender sensitivity into our programmes, and to support our women staff to lead others, to bring women forward and into the forefront of our campaign."

Morris Ayikanying, Programme Officer, Ugandan Red Cross Society.

"When I tested HIV positive in 1997 there was nobody to support us. We had to support ourselves. I joined NACWOLA and started attending psychosocial support groups. Together we designed activities to support ourselves. I became a volunteer to support and reach out to other women, who like myself, had been isolated....I have never had any formal management training and I want to help my organisation be more effective. I want to use the opportunity to network and brainstorm with professionals who bring new perspectives."

Jacinta Magero, Programme Officer NACWOLA

"We wanted to create a platform to bring together women from across the world; women everywhere are the most affected by poverty and discrimination, but they play the most instrumental role in the family and the community."

Julie Saunders, Executive Director of Pepal